

Appendix A Glossary of Key Terms

For the purposes of the *COVEOP*, the following terms and definitions apply:

Agency – A division of government with a specific function offering a particular kind of assistance. In the Incident Command System (ICS), agencies are defined either as jurisdictional (having statutory responsibility for incident management) or as assisting or cooperating (providing resources or other assistance).

Agency Representative – A person assigned by a primary, supporting or cooperating state agency or nongovernmental organization or private entity who has been delegated authority, in consultation with the leadership of that agency, to make decisions affecting that agency's or organization's participation in incident management activities.

Catastrophe (catastrophic incident) – Any natural or human caused incident, including acts of terrorism, that results in extraordinary levels of mass casualties, damage, or disruption severely affecting the population, infrastructure, environment, economy and/or government functions.

Civil Defense Warning System (CDWS) – The total system over which a warning or other emergency information is transmitted throughout the nation. It consists of fully federally funded and/or partially federally funded systems. In Virginia, National Warning System (NAWAS), Virginia Warning System (VAWAS), Washington Area Warning System (WAWAS), and Virginia Criminal Information Network (VCIN) comprise the in-state components of the Civil Defense Warning System.

Coastal Zone – In Virginia, this applies to all waters subject to tide and specified ports and harbors on inland rivers and other categories of land surface, ground waters and ambient air proximal to those waters. The term delineates an area of Federal responsibility for response action.

Code of Virginia (Code) – The compilation of the laws of the Commonwealth of Virginia. Entries in the *COVEOP* that are authorized or specified in law usually include a *Code* citation.

Commonwealth – Of or pertaining to the Commonwealth of Virginia.

Command Staff – In an incident management organization, the Command Staff consists of the Incident Commander and the special staff positions of the Public Information Officer, Safety Officer, and other positions as required that report directly to the Incident Commander.

Common Operating Picture (COP) – A broad view of the overall situation as reflected by situation reports, aerial photography and other information or intelligence.

Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) – A federal grant program that often supplements its annual block grants with post-disaster funds to assist in rebuilding communities. The Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) manages the post-disaster CDBG grants in Virginia.

Community Recovery – The process of assessing the effects of a disaster or catastrophic event, defining resources, and developing and implementing a course of action to restore and revitalize the socioeconomic and physical structure of the community.

Consequence Management – A predominantly emergency management function that includes measures to protect public health and safety, restore essential government services and provide emergency relief to individuals, businesses and governments affected by the consequences of terrorism. (See also Crisis Management)

Continuity of Government (COG) – A process of identifying the essential functions of government, including the critical functions of government offices and agencies, and developing and implementing plans to ensure the continuation of those functions in the face of disruptions from any cause.

Continuity of Operations – A process of identifying the essential functions - including staff, systems and procedures - that ensure the continuation of the agency's ability to operate.

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Continuity of Operations (COOP) Plan – In the context of Virginia state government, the Governor has required all executive branch agencies to complete and exercise a plan that identifies essential functions and provides the resources to ensure the agency's ability to continue those operations. Essential functions for Virginia Emergency Response Team (VERT) agencies include their ability to perform their VERT roles.

Coordinated Action Plan (CAP) – Written plan using National Incident Management System (NIMS) Incident Command System (ICS) forms containing priorities and general objectives reflecting the overall strategy for managing an incident.

COVEOP – Commonwealth of Virginia Emergency Operations Plan – The *Code* authorizes the Governor to adopt and implement the *COVEOP* which provides state-level emergency response to any type of disaster affecting Virginia and provides the framework for more detailed plans and procedures.

Crisis Information (See emergency public information)

Crisis Management – A predominantly law enforcement function that includes measures to identify, acquire and plan the use of resources needed to anticipate, prevent, and/or resolve a threat or act of terrorism. (See also Consequence Management)

Critical Infrastructure – Systems and assets, whether physical or virtual, so vital to the community, the Commonwealth, or the nation that the incapacity or destruction of such systems and assets would have a debilitating impact on security, economic security, public health or safety, or any combination of those matters.

Cultural Resources – Cultural resources include historic and prehistoric structures, archeological sites, cultural landscapes and museum collections. Federal and state laws govern actions that would impact these resources.

Defense Support of Civil Authorities (DSCA) – Refers to support by the U.S. Department of Defense (DOD) military forces, and its agencies and contractors, for domestic emergencies and for designated law enforcement and other activities.

Department of Homeland Security, U.S. (USDHS) – The federal agency responsible for implementing the *National Response Framework (NRF)*. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) is a part of the USDHS.

Economic Crisis Task Force (ECTF) – Following a disaster that severely impacts the social and/or economic functioning of a community or region of Virginia, the Governor may direct the Secretary of Commerce and Trade to activate a disaster-specific task force to coordinate the resources to plan and implement a strategy for long-term community recovery. *2006 Code § 2.2-205.1.E*.

Emergency – As defined by the *Code*, “any occurrence, or threat thereof, whether natural or man-made, which results or may result in substantial injury or harm to the population or substantial damage to or loss of property or natural resources”.

Emergency Alert System (EAS) – A network of broadcast stations interconnecting facilities authorized by the Federal Communications Commission to operate in a controlled manner, according to the State EAS Plan to inform the public of needed protective actions in the event of an emergency or disaster situation.

Emergency Coordination Officer (ECO) – An individual appointed by the head of each VERT agency to coordinate with the Department of Emergency Management, prepare and maintain parts of the *COVEOP* for which the agency is responsible, prepare and maintain internal plans and procedures and ensure the agency is capable of providing the assigned VERT functions.

Emergency Management – The coordination of efforts to prepare for and carry out the functions to prevent, minimize, respond to and recover from incidents caused by natural hazards, man-made hazards and acts of terrorism.

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Emergency Management Accreditation Program (EMAP) – A voluntary assessment and accreditation process for state and local government emergency management programs. Accreditation is based on compliance with collaboratively developed national standards.

Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC) – An agreement and organization ratified by Congress and the Virginia General Assembly that provides form and structure to interstate mutual aid. Through EMAC, a disaster impacted state can request and receive assistance from other member states quickly and efficiently.

Emergency Operations Center (EOC) – The physical location at which the coordination of information and resources to support incident management activities takes place. The Virginia Emergency Operations Center (VEOC) in Richmond is the coordination center for the Governor and the VERT.

Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) – The plans for managing all-hazards incidents. The *Code* requires the Commonwealth and its jurisdictions to prepare and maintain emergency operations plans.

Emergency Public Information (EPI) – Information that is disseminated to the public primarily in anticipation of an emergency or during an emergency. It provides situational information and also frequently provides directive actions to be taken by the general public.

Emergency Responder – Includes local, state and federal emergency services, public safety, law enforcement, emergency medical services (pre-hospital and hospital), search and rescue, fire services, and related personnel, agencies and authorities.

Emergency Services – The preparation for and carrying out of the functions to prevent, minimize and repair injury and damage resulting from natural or man-made disasters, together with all other activities necessary or incidental to the preparation for and carrying out of the foregoing functions. (*Code* §44-146.16 for list of included services.)

Emergency Support Function (ESF) – A grouping of government and certain private and voluntary organization capabilities into an organizational structure to provide the support, resources, program implementation and services that are most likely to be needed to save lives, protect property and the environment, restore essential services and critical infrastructure, and help victims and communities return to normal, when feasible, following incidents.

Environment – Natural and cultural resources and historic properties as those terms are defined in this glossary and relevant laws.

Environmental Response Team – Established by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the federal Environmental Response Team provides technical advice and assistance to the On-Site Coordinator for both planning and response to discharges and releases of oil and hazardous substances into the environment.

Evacuation – Organized and supervised withdrawal, dispersal or removal of people from dangerous or threatened areas, and their reception and care in safe areas.

Executive Order – A statement issued by the Governor to declare a state of emergency and to authorize and direct actions by state agencies. Executive orders, including those declaring a state of emergency and directing evacuation, shall have the force and effect of law.

Federal – Of or pertaining to the government of the United States of America. (Also see ‘national’.)

Federal Coordinating Officer (FCO) – The federal officer who is appointed to manage federal resource support activities related to disasters declared under the Stafford Act. The FCO is joined in the Joint Field Office (JFO) by the State Coordinating Officer (SCO) and is responsible for coordinating the timely delivery of Federal disaster assistance resources and programs to the state and affected localities.

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) – A component of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security responsible for providing technical support to states and local governments to respond to and recover from emergencies and disasters caused by any hazard.

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Federal-Commonwealth Agreement – A document signed by the Governor and the Regional Director of DHS/FEMA, after the President has declared an emergency or major disaster, that formalizes the joint responsibilities for providing assistance programs under the Stafford Act. The Agreement must be signed before federal or state funds are expended.

FEMA National Radio System (FNARS) – A high frequency/single sideband (HF/SSB) voice and data radio system that serves as a radio backup to the FNAMS system linking state Emergency Management offices, the FEMA Federal Regional Centers, the FEMA Regional Offices, and FEMA National Headquarters together on one common system.

First Responder – Skilled personnel who in the early stages of an incident are responsible for the protection and preservation of life, property, evidence and the environment, such as government and non-governmental police, fire, emergency medical, search and rescue, emergency management, public health, public works and others.

Hazard Mitigation – Any action taken to reduce or eliminate the long-term risk to human life or property.

Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) – a federal program that makes cost-share grants available to states and localities after declared disasters in order to implement cost-effective measures to reduce or eliminate risks.

Hazardous Material (hazmat) – A substance or material, including a hazardous substance that has been determined to be capable of posing an unreasonable risk to health, safety and property when released into the environment.

Hazardous Materials Officer (HMO) – The VDEM staff who provide training and technical advice and assistance to local responders for both planning and response to discharges and releases of known and suspicious substances into the environment.

Hazardous Substance – Substances defined by specific federal legislation related to clean water, clean air, and solid waste disposal.

Historic Property – Any prehistoric or historic district, site, building, structure or object included in or eligible for inclusion in the National Registry of Historic Places including artifacts, records, and remains which are related to such district, site, building or object. Federal and state laws govern actions that would impact historic properties.

Incident – An occurrence or event, natural or human-caused that requires an emergency response to protect life or property.

Incident Action Plan (IAP) – An oral or written plan containing general objectives reflecting the overall strategy for managing an incident.

Incident Command Post (ICP) – The field location at which the primary tactical-level, on-scene incident command functions are performed.

Incident Command System (ICS) – A standardized on-scene emergency management construct specifically designed to provide for the adoption of an integrated organizational structure that reflects the complexity and demands of single or multiple incidents. ICS is the combination of facilities, equipment, personnel, procedures and communications operating within a common organizational structure. It is designed to aid in the management of resources during incidents.

Incident Commander (IC) – The individual responsible for all incident activities. The IC has overall authority and responsibility for the management of all incident operations and is responsible for the management of all incident operations at the incident site.

Incident Management Cadre (IMC) – consists of personnel designated by the VERT Coordinator, to include but not limited to representatives of Public Affairs, Local Support Services, Operations, Logistics, Planning, Finance and subject matter experts to determining the need to augment the VERT.

Incident Management Team (IMT) – The Incident Commander and appropriate command and general staff personnel assigned to an incident.

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Individuals and Households Program (IHP)

The program administered by FEMA that provides assistance to individuals affected by a major disaster. The IHP includes the cost-share Other Needs Program (ONA), managed by the State, which provides limited financial assistance directly to eligible individuals.

Infrastructure – The manmade physical systems, assets, projects, and structures publicly and privately owned, that are used by or provide benefit to the public. Examples of infrastructure include utilities, bridges, levees, water systems, roads, etc.

In-kind Donations – Donations other than cash, usually materials or volunteer service, for people and communities impacted by disasters.

Instaphone – The telephone company terminology used to identify the installed telephone terminal equipment used at a NAWAS, VAWAS, or WAWAS communications point. The terminology is also used to describe the similar equipment located at points within the 10-mile emergency planning zone (EPZ) of a nuclear power station.

Integrated Flood Observing and Warning

System (IFLOWS) – An information system that collects and analyzes real-time data from rain and stream gages placed throughout the western Virginia watersheds. IFLOWS is a federal-state-local partnership that links the National Weather Service and local governments to the VEOC in order to provide flood alerts and warnings to localities. The program also operates in neighboring Appalachian states.

Joint Field Office (JFO) – A temporary federal facility established near a declared disaster area to provide a central point for federal, state, voluntary and local officials with responsibilities for incident oversight, direction and assistance.

Joint Information Center (JIC) – A facility established to coordinate all incident-related public information activities. It is the central point of contact for all news media for information related to the incident. Public information officials from all participating federal and state agencies will collocate at the JIC.

Joint Operations Center (JOC) – The JOC is the focal point for all federal investigative law enforcement activities during a terrorist or potential terrorist incident or any other significant criminal incident, and is the point of coordination with state and local law enforcement officials. The JOC becomes a component of the JFO when the National Response Framework (NRF) is activated.

Local Emergency – The condition declared by the local governing body when in its judgment the threat of actual occurrence of an emergency or disaster is or threatens to be of sufficient severity and magnitude to warrant coordinated local government action to prevent or alleviate the damage, loss, hardship or suffering threatened or caused thereby.

Local Government – For managing local emergencies, local governments include counties, cities and towns. When applying for federal assistance for damaged facilities, local applicants may also include school districts, local public authorities, regional planning commissions and councils of government and some other authorities that perform quasi-governmental functions.

Local Support Services (LSS) Regional Coordinator

– is a dedicated, professional assigned to each Virginia emergency management region to provide ongoing support in the design, development, analysis and implementation of comprehensive all hazards emergency management programs at the local and regional levels.

Major Disaster – Any natural catastrophe (including any hurricane, tornado, storm, high water, wind-driven water, tidal wave, tsunami, earthquake, volcanic eruption, landslide, mudslide, snowstorm, or drought) or, regardless of cause, any fire, flood, or explosion in any part of the United States that, in the determination of the President, causes damage of sufficient severity and magnitude to warrant major disaster assistance under the Stafford Act to supplement the efforts and available resources of States, local governments, and disaster relief organizations in alleviating the damage, loss, hardship, or suffering caused thereby.

Mission Assignment – The method used by the Virginia Emergency Operations Center (VEOC) to respond to requests for assistance by local governments. The VEOC directs state agencies to

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provide immediate, short-term emergency response assistance when applicable.

Mitigation – Activities designed to reduce or eliminate risks to persons or property or to lessen the actual or potential effects or consequences of an incident.

Mutual Aid Agreement – Written agreement between agencies, organizations and/or jurisdictions that they will assist one another on request by furnishing personnel, equipment and/or expertise in a specified manner.

National Capital Region (NCR) – is composed of the District of Columbia and nearby jurisdictions in Maryland and Virginia.

National Incident Management System (NIMS) – A system mandated by the federal Homeland Security Presidential Directive (HSPD) #5 that provides a consistent, nationwide approach for governments (federal, state and local), voluntary agencies and the private sector to work effectively and efficiently together to prepare for, respond to, and recovery from incidents, regardless of cause, size or complexity. NIMS uses a core set of concepts, principles and terminology.

National Response Framework (NRF) – is a guide to how the Nation conducts all-hazards response. It is built upon scalable, flexible, and adaptable coordinating structures to align key roles and responsibilities across the Nation, linking all levels of government, nongovernmental organizations, and the private sector. It is intended to capture specific authorities and best practices for managing incidents that range from the serious but purely local, to large-scale terrorist attacks or catastrophic natural disasters.

National Warning System (NAWAS) – The federal portion of the CDWS used to disseminate warnings and other emergency information from federal warning centers or other federal agencies to the state warning points.

National Weather Service (NWS) – The federal agency which provides localized weather information to emergency managers and the public, including severe weather watches and warnings.

There are five NWS forecast offices that serve the Commonwealth; three are located in Virginia.

National Weather Wire Service (NWWS) – System used by the NWS to disseminate forecasts and other information to subscribers.

Nongovernmental Organization (NGO) – A nonprofit entity that is based on interests of its members, individuals or institutions and that is not created by the government, but may work cooperatively with government. Such organizations serve the public purpose, not a private benefit. Examples of NGOs are the members of the Virginia VOAD – Voluntary Organizations Active in Disasters.

Preparedness – As defined in the NRF, preparedness is the range of deliberate, critical tasks and activities necessary to build, sustain and improve the operational capability to prevent, protect against, respond to, and recover from incidents. Preparedness is a continuous process involving efforts by and among governments and other organizations and by the general public.

Public Assistance Program – The program established by the Stafford Act and administered by FEMA that provides supplemental assistance to public entities for the costs of emergency protective actions, debris removal, and repair and restoration of facilities such as roads, schools and other public buildings. In Virginia, the costs of the program are shared with the federal government by state and local governments.

Public Information Officer (PIO) – A member of the Command Staff in the VEOC and the JFO responsible for interfacing with the public and media with incident-related information.

Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Services (RACES) – An amateur radio communications system organized to provide temporary emergency communications support to federal, state, and local governments during periods of imminent or actual emergency.

Recovery – Activities that address the short-term and long-term needs and the resources to assist, restore, strengthen and rebuild affected individuals and communities.

Response – Activities that address the short-term, direct effects of an incident. Response includes

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immediate actions to save lives, protect property and meet basic human needs.

Shared Resources High Frequency Radio Program (SHARES)

– A National Communications System (NCS) High Frequency Radio Program that is available on a 24-hour basis to provide an emergency communications link to support intra- and interagency mission requirements.

Stafford Act, The – *The Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, 93 Pub. L. No.288 Stat. 143 as amended*, establishes the programs and processes for the federal government to provide disaster and emergency assistance to states, local governments, tribal nations, individuals and qualified private nonprofit organizations. The provisions cover all hazards including natural disasters and terrorist events.

State – Of or pertaining to the government of the Commonwealth of Virginia.

State Coordinating Officer – The state official appointed by the Governor to join the FCO in managing joint state-federal disaster assistance activities related to the Stafford Act.

State of Emergency – The condition declared by the Governor when, in his judgment, the threat or actual occurrence of an emergency or a disaster in any part of the Commonwealth is of sufficient severity and magnitude to warrant disaster assistance by the Commonwealth to supplement the efforts and available resources of the several localities and relief organizations in preventing or alleviating the damage, loss, hardship or suffering threatened or caused thereby and is so declared by him. (*Code* § 44-146.16)

Statewide Mutual Aid – A program to assist cities, counties and eligible towns to more effectively and efficiently exchange services and resources, especially in response to a major disaster wherein assistance needs to be provided from one area or region of the state to another.

Threat – Any indication of possible violence, harm or danger.

Tribe – Any Native American tribe, band, nation, or other organized group or community that is recognized by the Commonwealth of Virginia because of their status as Native Americans.

Unaffiliated Volunteer – An individual who is not formally associated with a recognized voluntary disaster relief organization; also known as a “spontaneous” or “emergent” volunteer.

Unified Command – An application of the Incident Command System (ICS) used when there is more than one agency with incident jurisdiction or when incidents cross political jurisdictions. Agencies work together through the designated members of the Unified Command to establish their designated Incident Commanders at a single Incident Command Post.

Unsolicited Goods – Donated goods offered by or sent to the incident site by the public or a private source that have not been requested by government or nonprofit disaster relief coordinators of that incident. State and local plans include procedures to manage unsolicited goods.

VDEM – Virginia Department of Emergency Management – The state agency responsible for coordinating the preparations and actions required to prevent and minimize the impact of hazards and to respond to and recover from emergencies and disasters.

Virginia Criminal Information Network (VCIN) – A data communications system operated by the Virginia State Police used to disseminate warnings and emergency information to regional warning points and local governments. Its primary use is law enforcement communications.

Virginia Emergency Response Team (VERT) – The group of designated state agencies and associated voluntary and private sector organizations responsible for acting on behalf of the governor to assist local governments in responding to and recovering from emergencies or disasters.

Virginia State Police (VSP) – The primary law enforcement agency of the Commonwealth of Virginia. VSP Administrative Headquarters operates the Alternate State Warning Point for NAWAS and VAWAS communications. It also serves as the VCIN State Control Center.

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Virginia Warning System (VAWAS) – The state portion of the CDWS used to disseminate warnings and emergency information from federal and state warning points to regional warning points located throughout the state.

VPIC - Virginia Public Inquiry Center – A call-receipt center established by the VERT to provide current information directly to members of the general public regarding a specific threat or incident. If activated by the VERT, the VPIC is operational within eight hours of an incident and can provide general and incident-specific information.

VAVOAD – Virginia Voluntary Organizations Active in Disasters – A statewide organization, affiliated with the National VOAD, composed of voluntary organizations, faith-based and sectarian, that have developed specific disaster response and/or recovery programs as part of their overall mission. Examples of VOAD-member programs include clean-up and repair teams, feeding operations, counseling, childcare facilities and long-term home construction teams.

Volunteer – Any individual accepted to perform services by any agency that has authority to accept volunteer services when the individual performs services without promise, expectation, or receipt of compensation for services performed.

Washington Area Warning System (WAWAS) – A regional warning system that serves Northern Virginia, the District of Columbia, selected federal agencies, and certain southern Maryland jurisdictions in the National Capital Region (NCR).